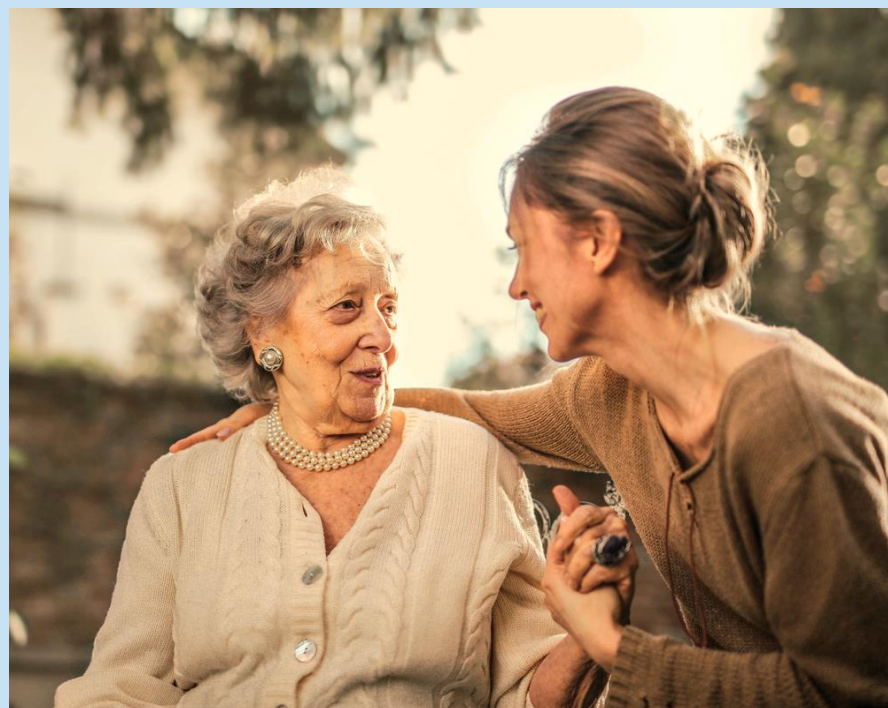


WHO CARES?

Insights on Caregiving and Parenthood in Finance

WIF Annual Event · BNP Paribas Fortis · 25 September 2026



WELCOME



Stephanie Grysolle
Chief HR Officer
BNP PARIBAS FORTIS

AGENDA

WIF Annual Event · BNP Paribas Fortis · 25 September 2026

12:15

NETWORKING LUNCH

13:00

WELCOME & SURVEY FINDINGS

14:00

INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS

15:10

DISCUSSION TABLES

16:15

INSIGHTS, TOOLS & CLOSING REMARKS

17:00

NETWORKING RECEPTION

PARENTHOOD AND CAREGIVING SURVEY RESULTS



Nathalie Delaere
Founder
IN A DIFFERENT VOICE

Who cares?

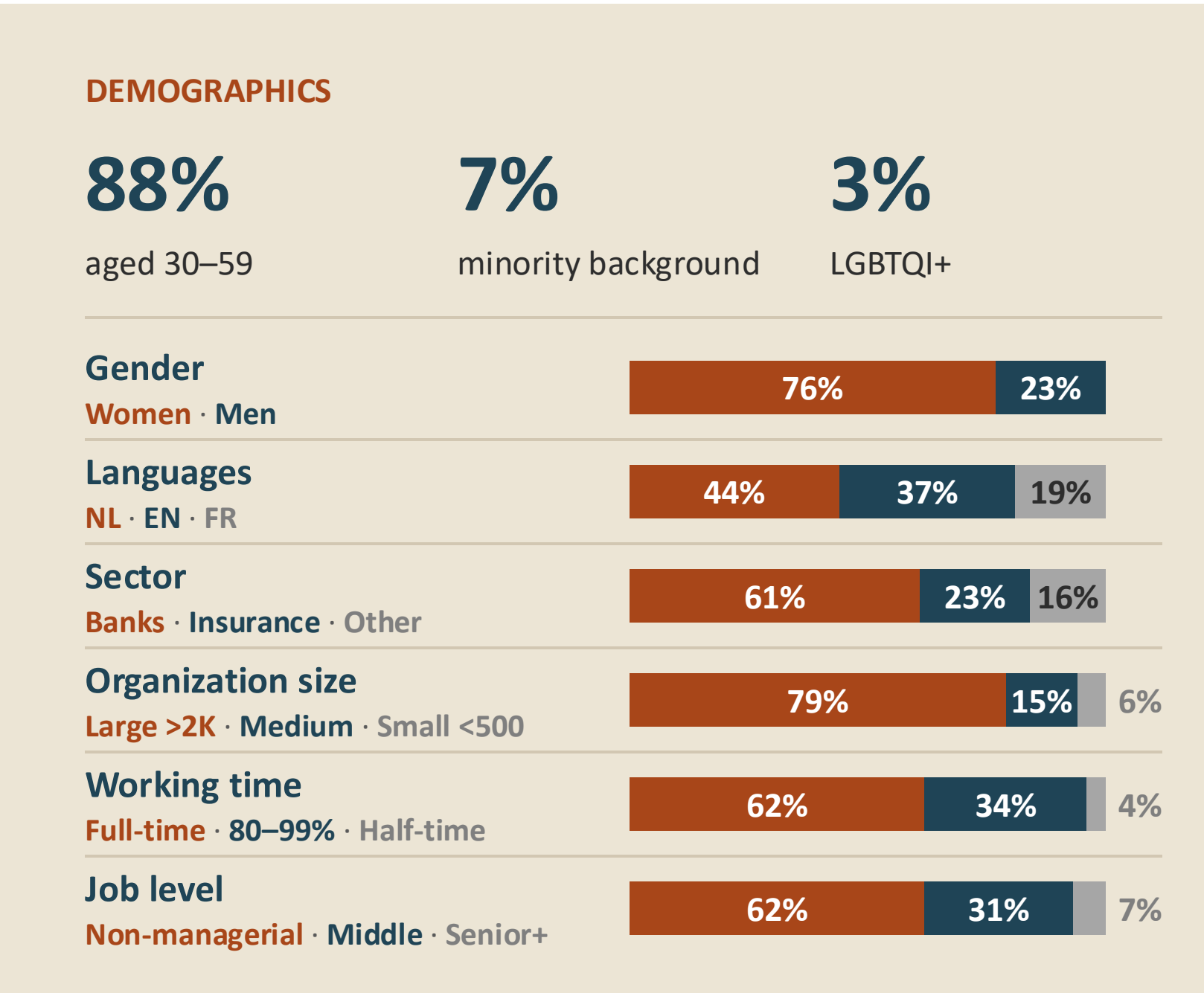
Findings from the Caregiving & Career Survey 2026, and what an organization can change.

Thank you to the 1.615 professionals in Belgian finance who took part.

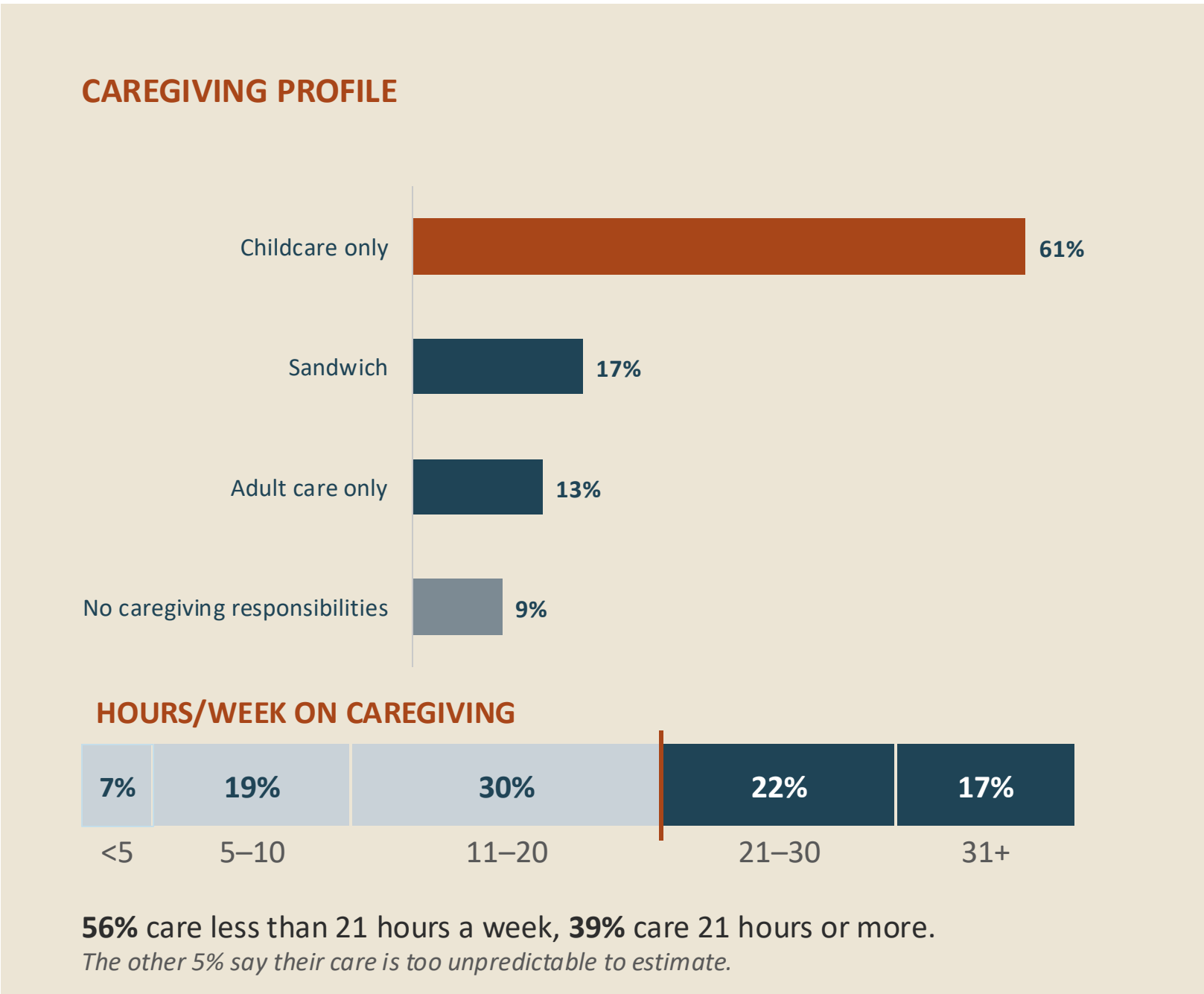
Full results presented by Nathalie Delaere · In a Different Voice

Who told us

1.615 caregivers in Belgian finance, three in four of them women



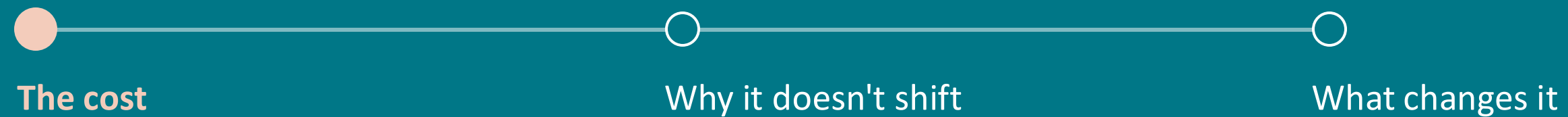
Self-selected sample. Findings describe this respondent base.



Part one

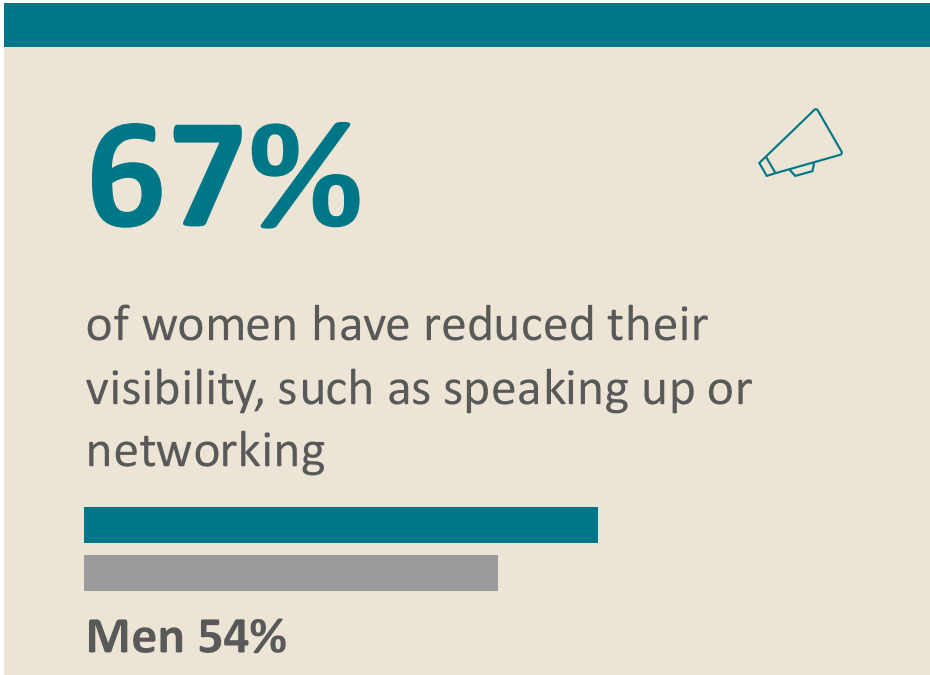
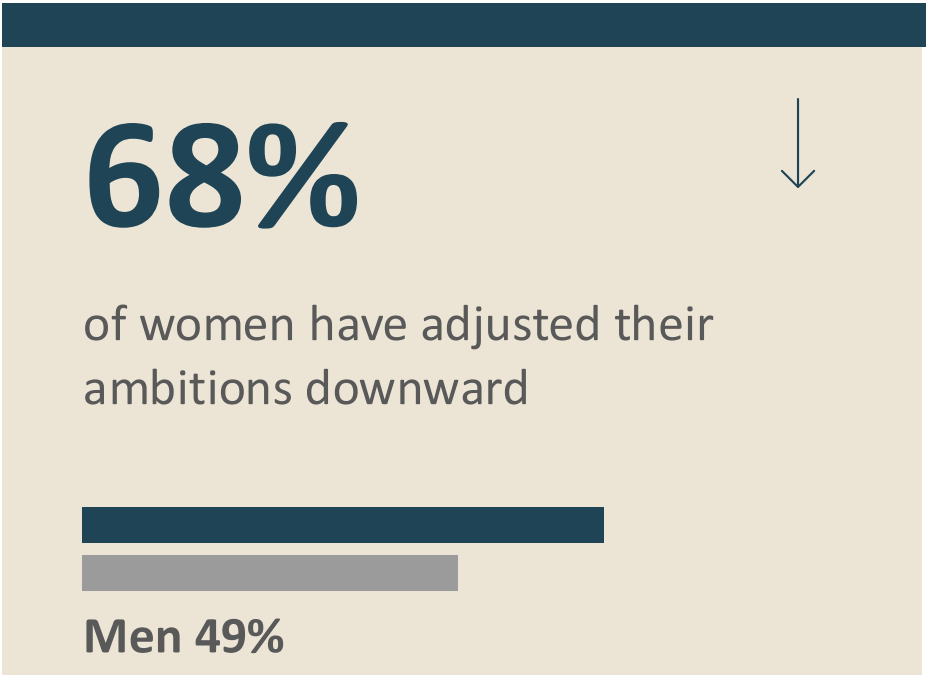
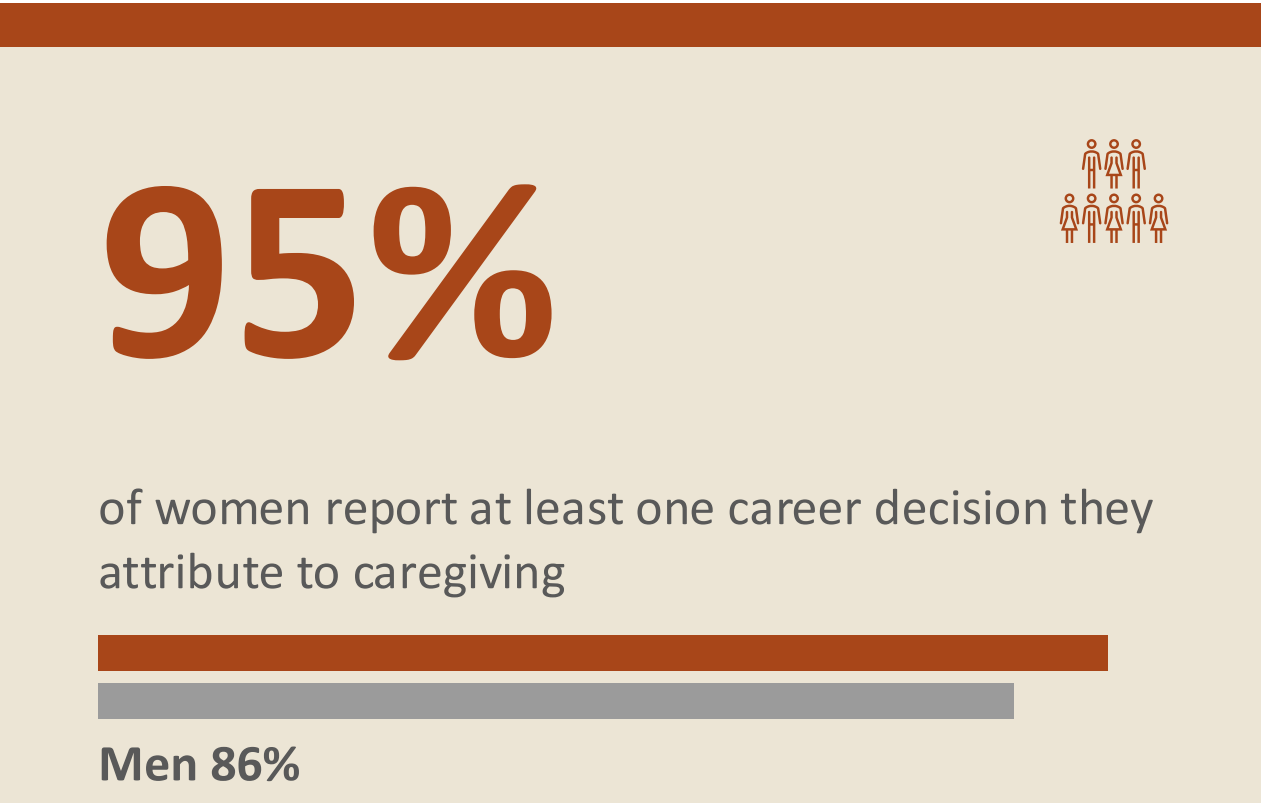
The cost

What caregiving takes from a career, and who carries it.



For caregivers, career impact is the norm

Almost every respondent can name a career decision they attribute to caregiving.



1.4x
more

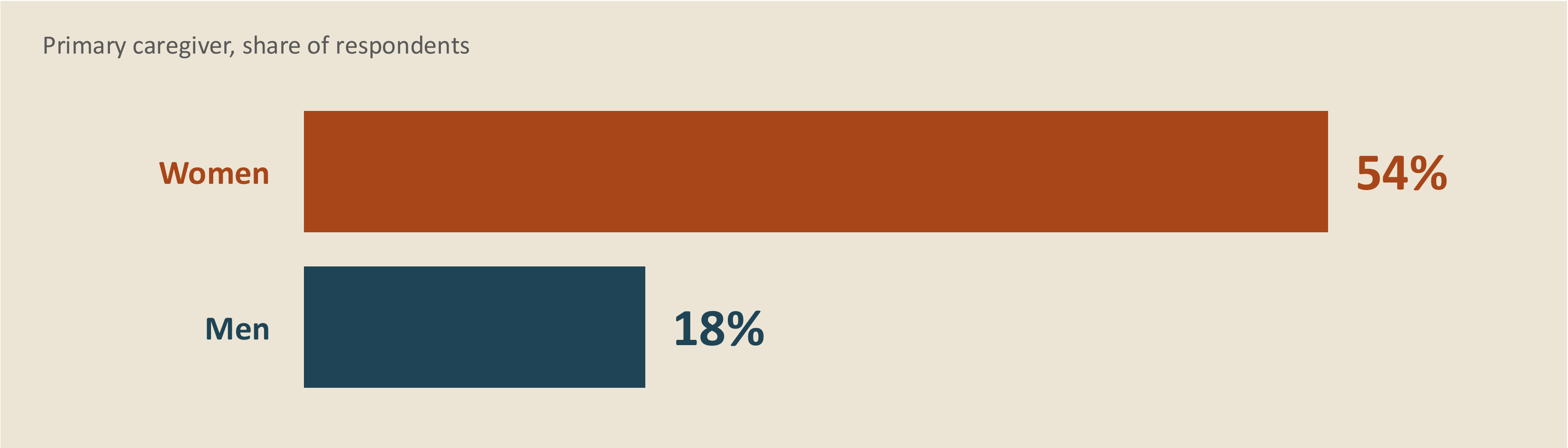
Minority women say career considerations shaped their **family planning** 1.4 x more compared to other women (68% against 48%)

2x
more

Senior women reduce their **visibility** 2 x more compared to senior men (66% against 33%)

Care is unequally divided before work even begins

Women are three times as likely as men to be the primary caregiver.



85% **Part-timers** are women in 85% of cases

The mental load

Most women carry it, and it reaches the work.

Mental load



81%

of women carry a significant mental load of planning and coordinating care



Men 66%

Focus at work



67%

of women say the mental load drains their focus at work



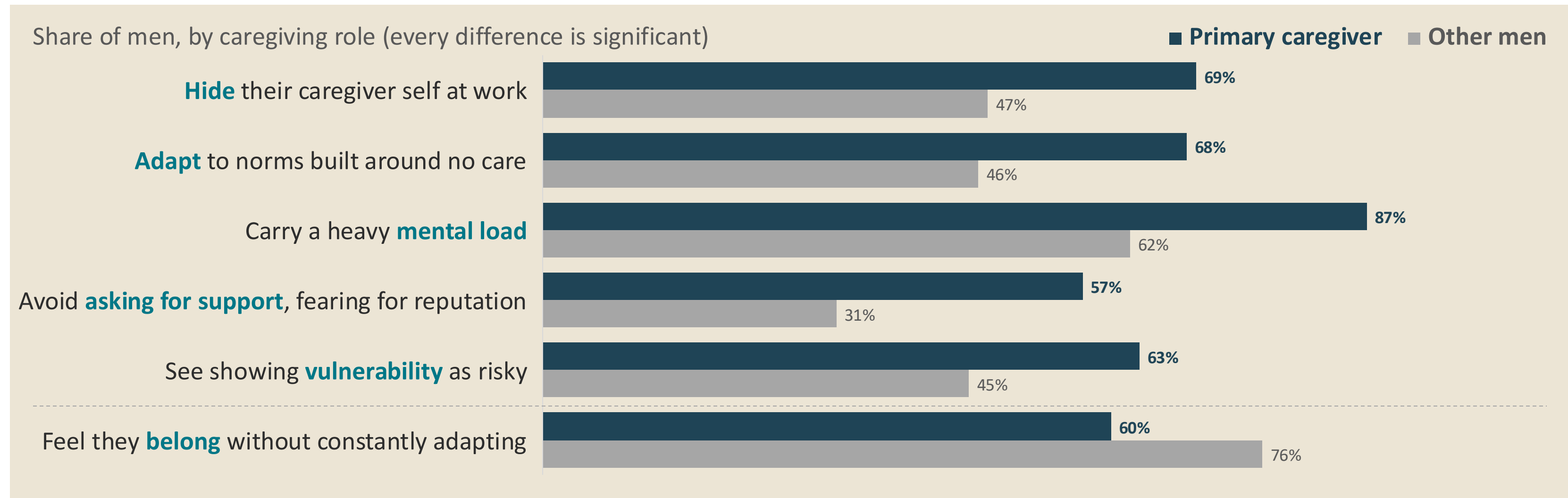
Men 54%

31h+

At 31 hours of care a week or more, women and men report the same career impact. Below that, women with the same hours carry more.

Men who are primary caregivers

Men who are primary caregivers carry more strain and feel less belonging than other men.



1 in 2 male primary caregivers say extended paternity leave brings negative signals

In their own words

“

When the children were small, I had to balance constantly between feeling guilty towards work, running out of meetings daily, and towards the children, because they were the last ones left in daycare.

Guilt surfaced in only a handful of written answers, almost always from women. In the focus groups it was a clear theme for women, sandwich-generation carers most of all; the men present did not raise it.

Woman, adult care, employee

Part two

Why it doesn't shift

The structures at the top, the pressure to fit in and the managers in between.



Two barriers at the top, and almost everyone sees them

90%



of all respondents say the **job** at the top is organized around long hours, travel and constant availability

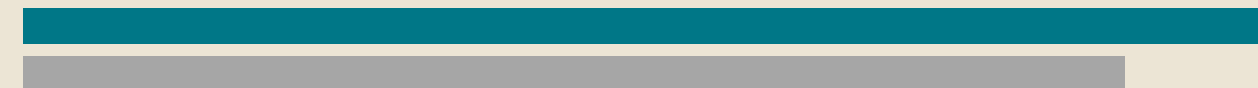


Men 87%

84%



of all respondents say combining care with leadership increases the **pressure** to assimilate



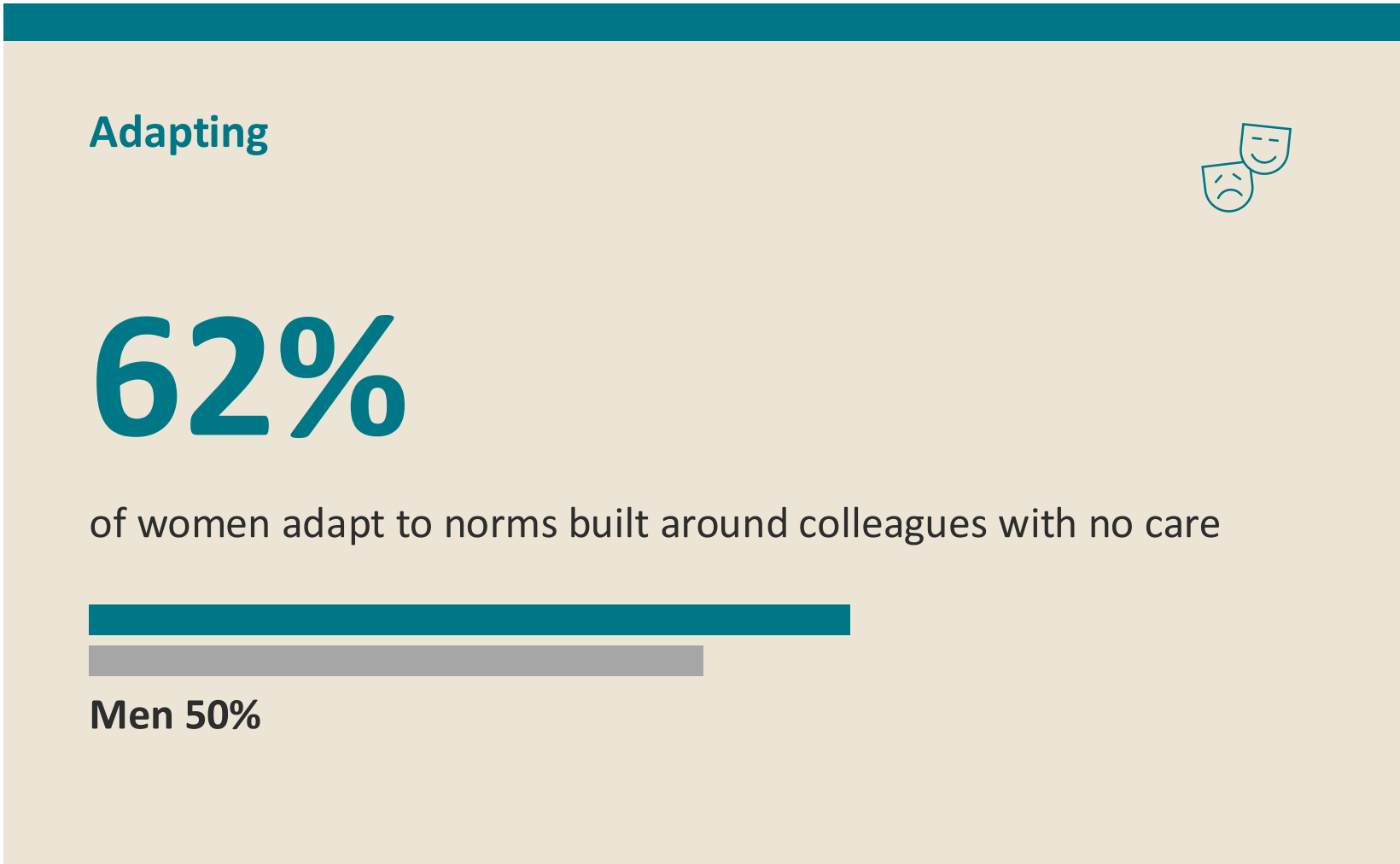
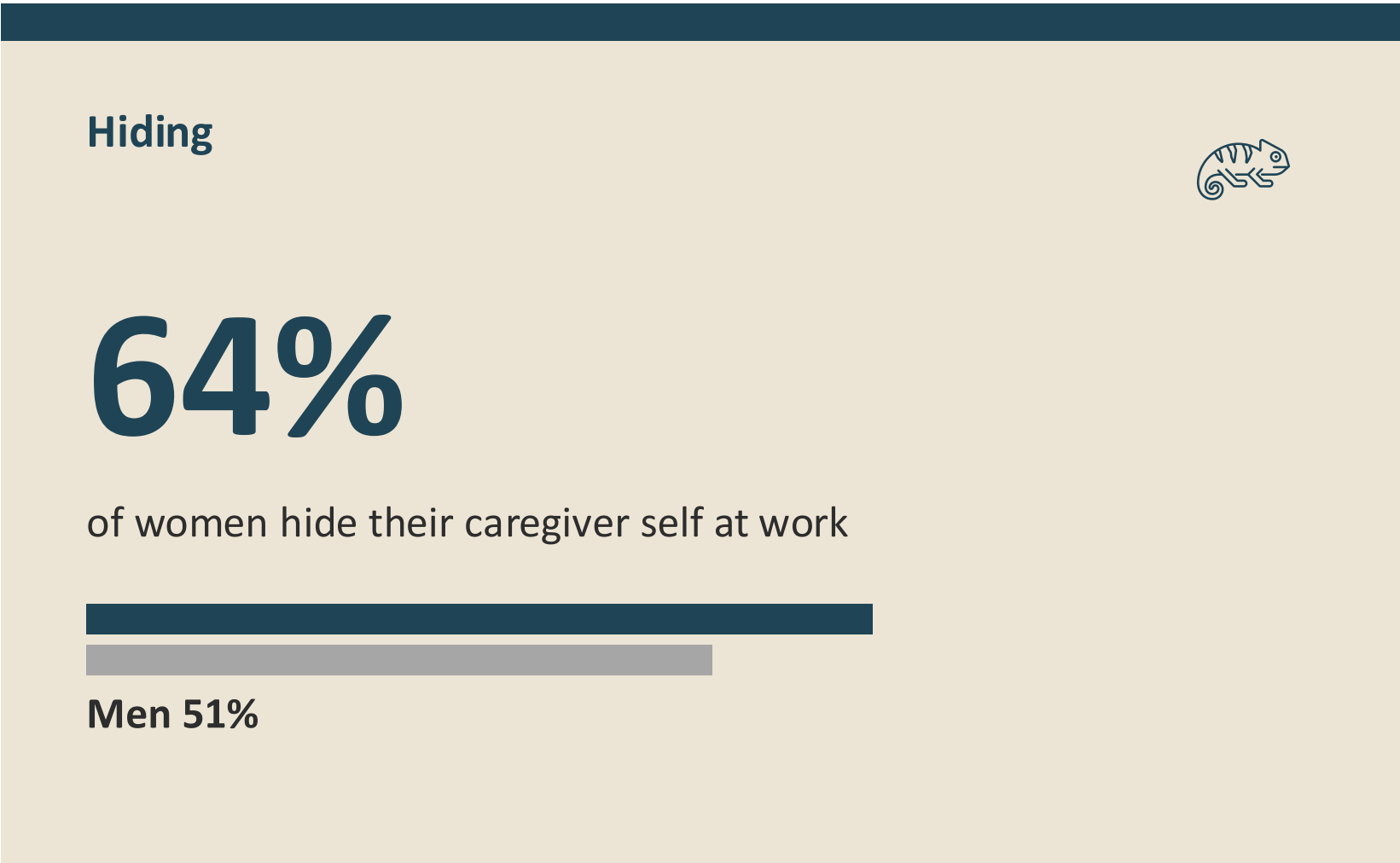
Men 77%

1.4x more

Senior women see the pressure to assimilate 1.4 x more compared to senior men (92% against 67%)

Assimilation

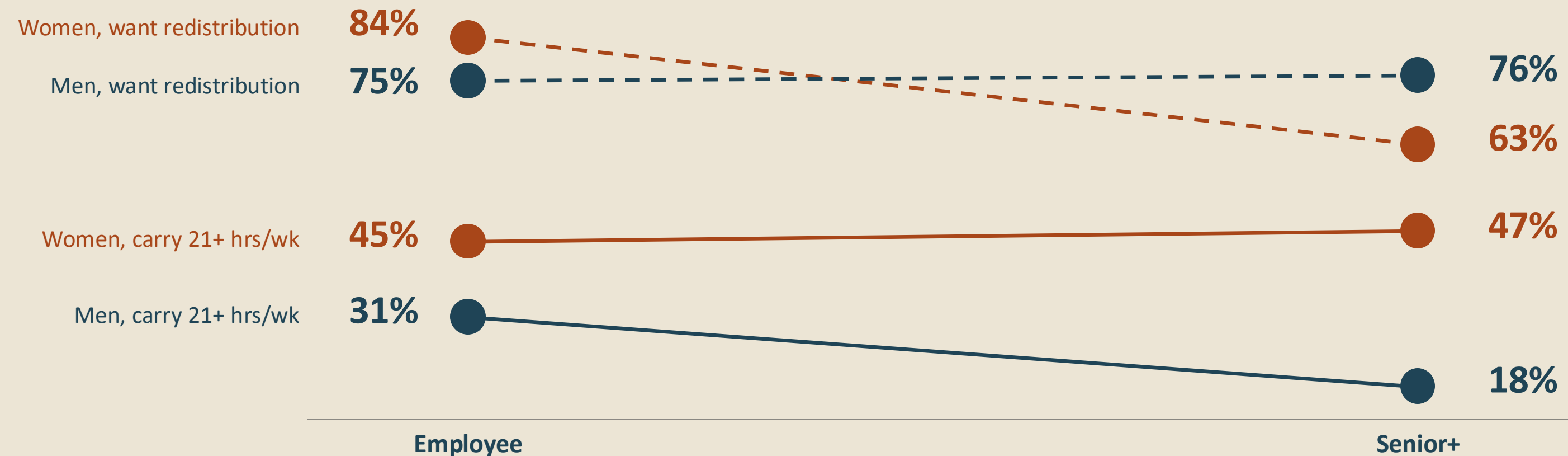
How caregivers respond to the pressure to look like a colleague without care.



Senior women	1.6× more likely than senior men to hide (66% against 42%)	1.2× more likely to adapt (59% against 48%)
Minority women	1.1× more likely than other women to hide (71% against 63%)	1.2× more likely to adapt (72% against 61%)

The assimilation burden

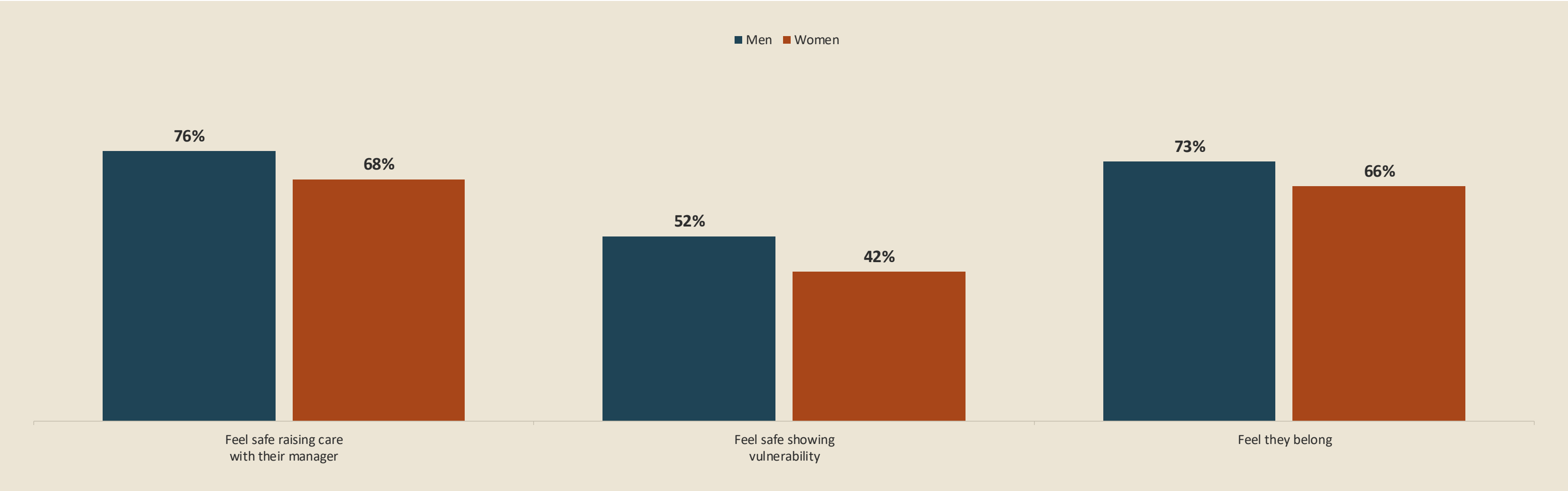
At senior level, women carry the same care but ask less often for support.



Psychological safety: senior women

Senior women feel less safe than other women on all three questions, while senior men are the most at ease in the survey.

Women vs men → **Senior women** → Minority women



Senior women
vs other women

↓ 6 pts raising care (62%)

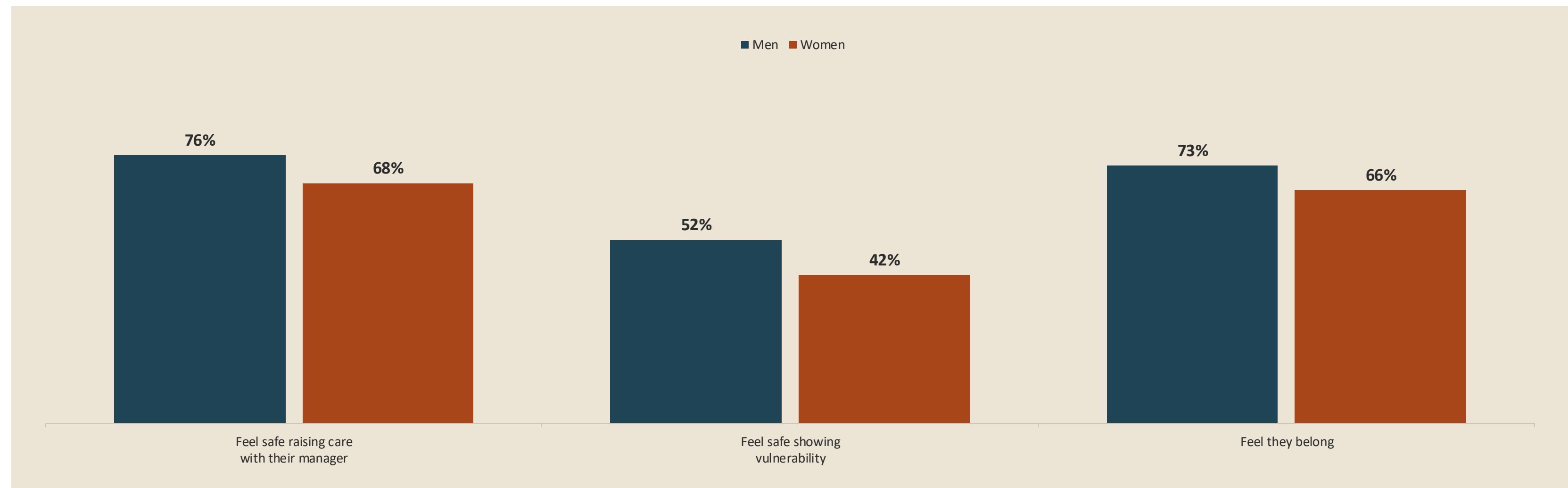
↓ 4 pts safe showing vulnerability (38%)

↓ 3 pts belonging (63%)

Psychological safety: minority women

Minority women feel less safe than other women on all three questions.

Women vs men → Senior women → **Minority women**



Minority women
vs other women

↓ **6 pts** raising care (62%)

↓ **17 pts** safe showing vulnerability (27%)

↓ **14 pts** belonging (53%)

In their own words

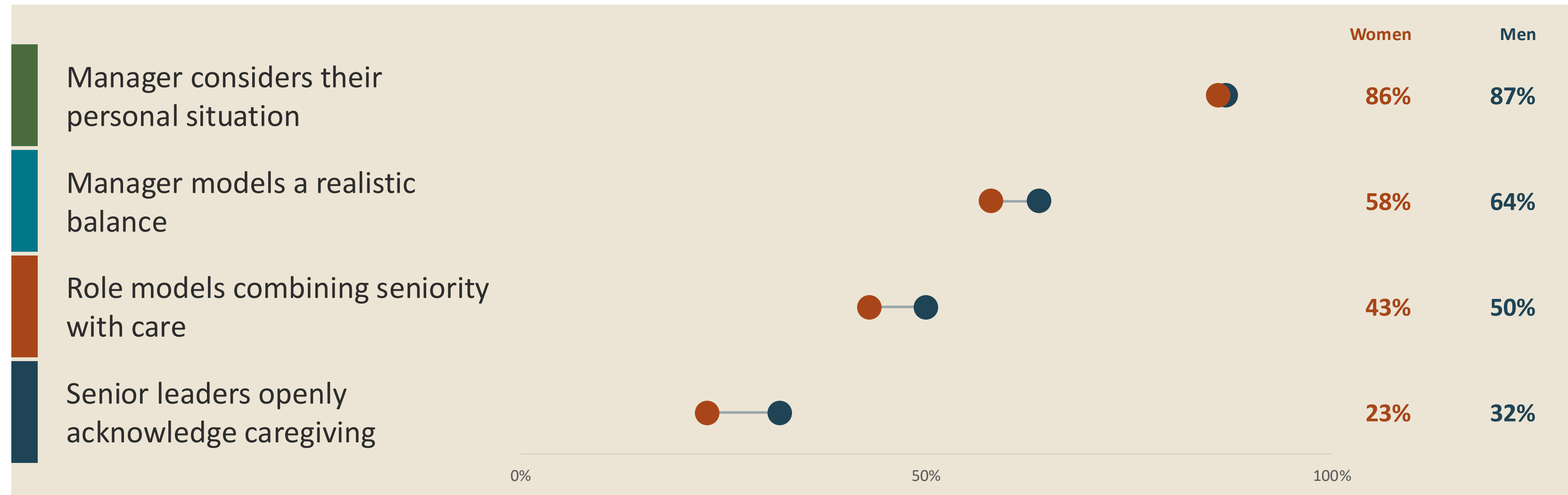
“

I do not discuss my personal issues with team as it annoys them.

Woman, minority, employee, 31+ hours of care a week.

What managers offer, and what they show

Managers are kind, but they do not model what they "support".



0.6× less **Senior women** say the organization acknowledges **care** 0.6 x less often compared to senior men (37% against 61%)

Office politics governs care, too

Access to support depends heavily on the manager you happen to have.

52%



of women say access to support turns on **manager discretion**

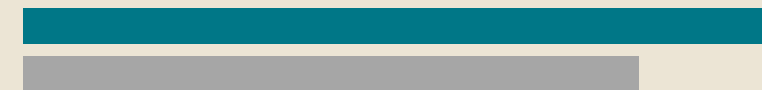


Men 49%

53%



of women say **informal signals** shape who progresses and who gets the good assignments



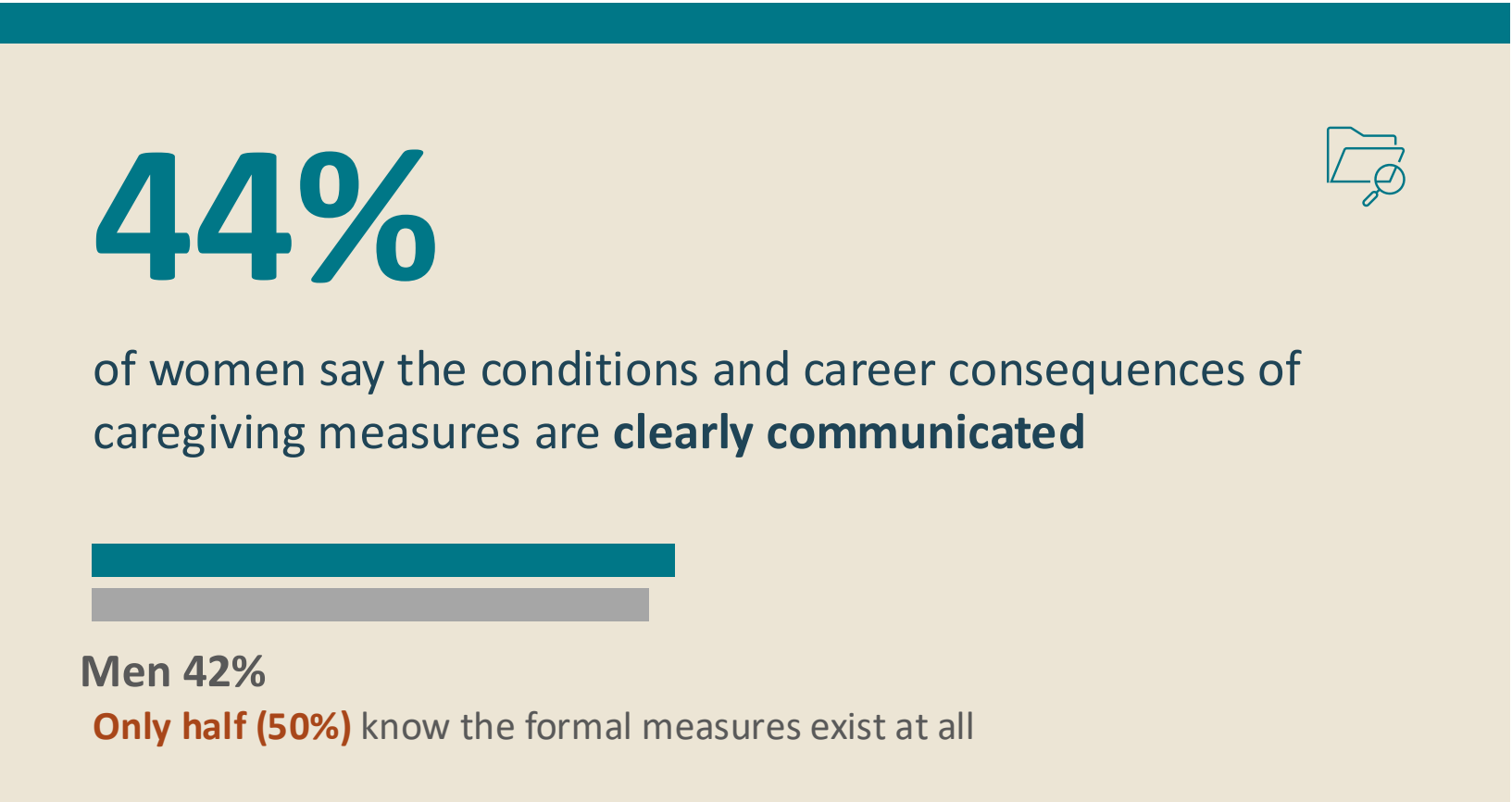
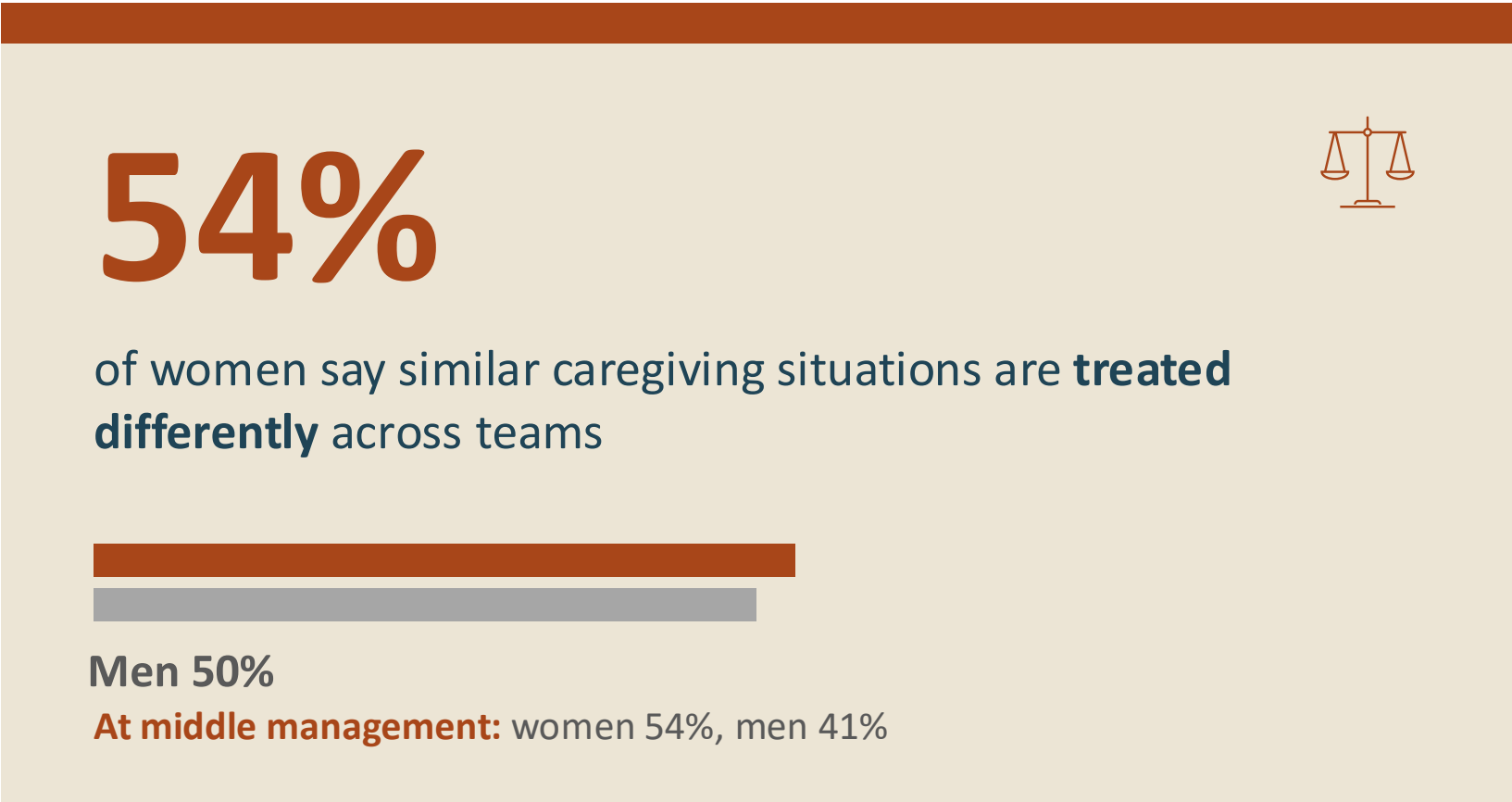
Men 43%

1.8x more

Women in middle management say care is seen as a **lack of ambition** 1.8 x more compared to men (44% vs. 25%)

The unwritten rules

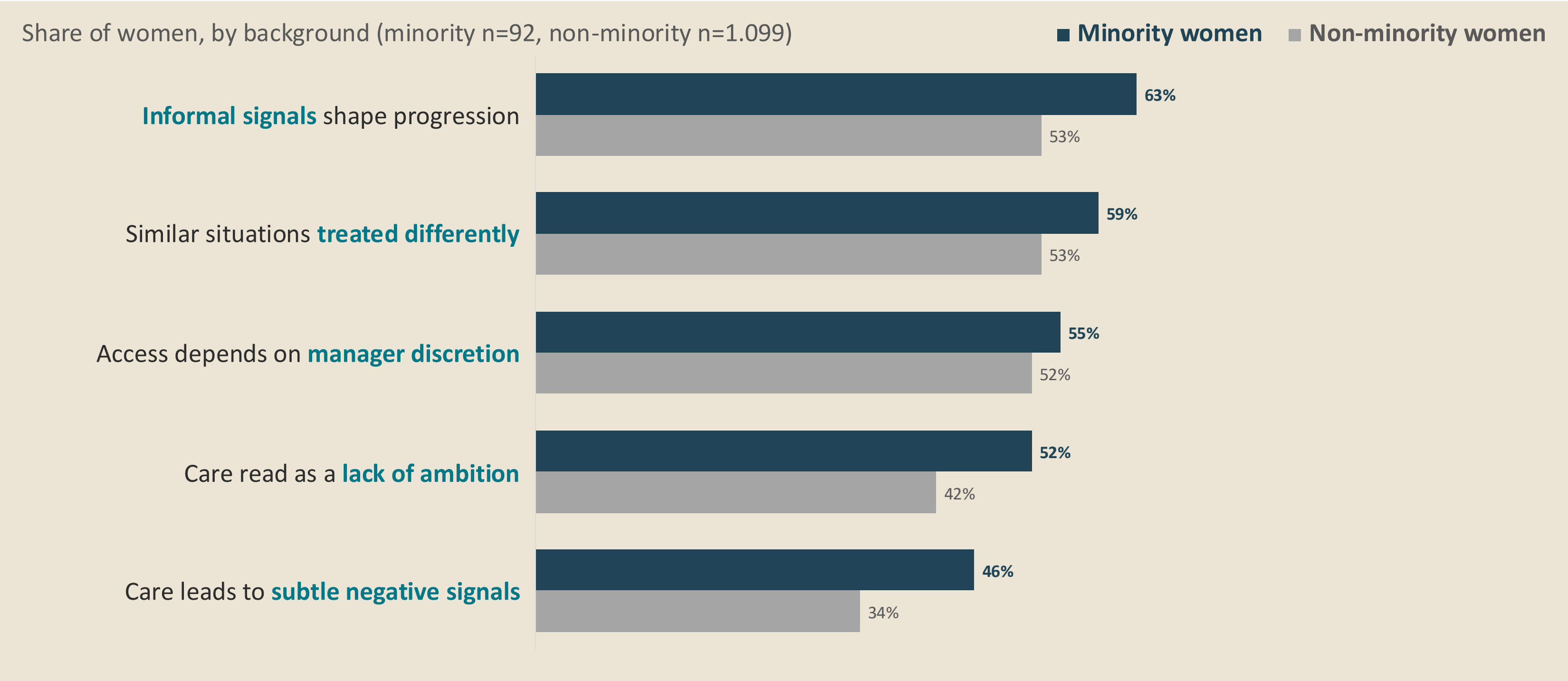
Measures exist on paper; their application varies from team to team, most of all in middle management.



1.5x more **Women in middle management** face remarks, jokes and assumptions 1.5 x more compared to men (35% against 23%)

Unwritten rules weigh more on minority women

Minority women score higher than other women on all five signals, most of all on subtle negative signals.



When the arrangement does not fit the care

Reduced hours with a full workload, and care that cannot be planned.

Working 4/5 or 9/10

77%

of women working 4/5 or 9/10 have adjusted their ambitions downward



Women working full-time 61%

The sandwich generation

74%

of those caring for a child and an adult have adjusted their ambitions downward



Caring only for children 64%

2 in 10

Women working 4/5 or 9/10 see a proportional cut in workload

1.3x more

Sandwich carers avoid asking for support 1.3 x more compared to those caring only for children (56% against 44%)

The exit is about the employer before the industry

24% have considered leaving their organization, 18% the sector.



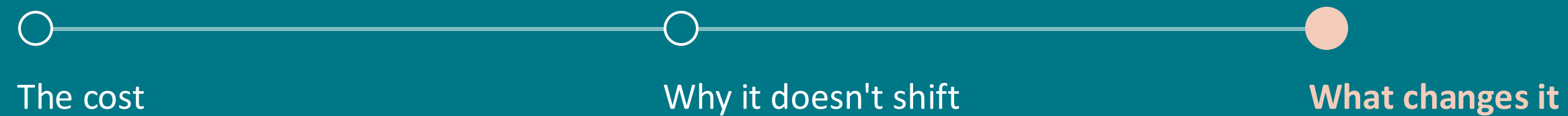
1.5x more **Women** consider leaving 1.5 x more compared to men (organization 25% against 17%, sector 19% against 13%)

3 in 10 **Minority women** have considered leaving the sector, against 19% of other women

Part three

What changes it

Culture as the lever.



The fix lies in culture

Kindness makes the day bearable; only structural change moves people away from the exit.

WHO YOU ARE MATTERS LESS

Being a woman

Senior management

Primary caregiver

21+ care hours

PREDICTS EXITS MORE

Assimilation **1.31×**

Structural barriers **1.25×**

Mental load **1.20×**

Part-time work **1.44×**

Cultural signals **1.11×**

The Wo.Men in Finance Career Blockers Survey (2022) reaches the same conclusion.

In their own words

“

Senior leadership being vulnerable enough to share their own stories instead of protecting an image that fits the system.

The same request came back in Dutch: “Rolmodellen op senior-managementniveau die hun professionele rol combineren met een zorgrol.”

Woman, childcare only, 31+ hours/week

What an organization can change

Seven priorities in three groups. You will take them to your table for discussion later today.

Fix the structure of work

1 Decouple flexibility from penalty

Reduced and flexible working stays career-safe, with proportional workload and protected progression.

2 Manage the invisible load

Name and measure the mental load, and treat redistribution of work by design.

3 Remove what pushes women out

Redistribute workload for real at senior levels and make asking for support blame-free.

Widen who care belongs to

4 Recognise care beyond children

Extend language, leave and permission to adult, disability and sandwich-generation care.

5 Normalise caregiving for men

Make extended partner leave real and penalty-free, and back the men who carry care openly.

Lead it as culture

6 Make care visible at the top

Sponsor senior role models and protect the managers who carry care and currently hide it.

7 Treat care as culture

The organization designs the experience that drives people out, and it can redesign it.

LATER, AT YOUR TABLE Pick one priority: what would it look like in your organization, and what stands in its way today?

So, who cares?

1.615 people in Belgian finance do, and they carry it at home and at work.

Whether it costs them their career can be changed.

Today we can start it: pick one priority and take it back with you.

WORKSHOPS

WIF Annual Event · BNP Paribas Fortis · 25 September 2026

WORKSHOP TITLE	ANIMATOR	ROOM	COLOUR	VOLUNTEER
Not Less Committed : Challenging bias against parents and caregivers at work	Tamara Eelsing	Auditorium		An Pierson
Setting strong boundaries as a working caregiver	Leen Vermeersch	Grand Foyer		Annelies Bruyninckx
Never good enough: How to manage guilt and perfectionism as a working caretaker	Itzel Lusenti	Small Foyer		Stephanie Fahsbender
(FR) Wonder Parent Wonder Pro ! Reconnaître et prévenir le burnout parental	Marie-Christine Wats	Break Out Room 1		Jeroen Somers
Too Much to Care For? — Surviving the Sandwich Years	Claire Godding	Break Out Room 2		Urvi Thanki

DISCUSSION TABLES

ON POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS



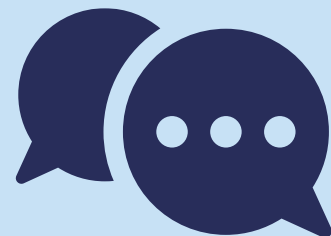
1. GATHER AT YOUR TABLE

- Each table will consist of 10-12 participants
- Take a moment to introduce yourselves
- Nominate one scribe who will capture key insights throughout the discussion



2. CHOOSE YOUR CONVERSATIONS (5 MINS)

- Each table will receive a Topic Menu with 3 discussion topics.
- As a group, select 2 topics to discuss
- Prioritize the topics that resonate most with your table



3. DISCUSSION TIME (2 X 20 MINS)

- Discuss your chosen topics
- Encourage everyone to contribute and build on each other's ideas
- Capture your takeaways (allocate a group scribe) noting
 - Main insights, common challenges, practical recommendations and ideas to share with the larger group
 - Select one person who will share one concrete action during the conclusion

FROM CONVERSATION TO COMMITMENT

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED, WHAT WE'LL TAKE FORWARD



DISCUSSION TABLES OUTPUTS



PRACTICAL TOOLS AND TAKEAWAYS FROM THE WORKSHOPS

Resources to continue the conversation beyond today's event



CLOSING REMARKS

Reflections on the day's key messages

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1

Decouple flexibility from penalty

Make reduced and flexible working genuinely career-safe, with proportional workload and protected progression.

2

Manage the invisible load

Name and measure the mental load and the hiding of the caregiver self and redistribute work during intensive periods as a matter of course.

3

Remove what pushes senior women out

Give them real support at senior levels and make asking for help blame-free.

4

Make caregiving visible at the top

Sponsor senior role models and protect the managers who carry care and currently hide it.

5

Recognise care beyond children

Extend leave and benefits to adult, disability and sandwich-generation care.

6

Normalise caregiving for men

Make partner leave real and penalty-free, so care can be shared at home as much as at work.

7

Treat it as culture rather than accommodation

Individual kindness is not enough; the organization designs the experience that drives people out, and it can redesign it

QR CODE



CREATE YOUR TOOLBOX

CREATE YOUR TOOLBOX



**NOT LESS COMMITTED : CHALLENGING
BIAS AGAINST PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS
AT WORK**

TAMARA EELSING

STIB-MIVB

5 key take aways for caregivers

- 1. KNOW THE BIAS**
So you can navigate it.
- 2. SHOW YOUR IMPACT**
Make your contribution visible.
- 3. BE THERE WHEN IT MATTERS**
You don't need to be everywhere.
- 4. DON'T MAKE YOUR “CARE GIVER TASKS” THE STORY**
State the constraint. Give the solution. Move on.
- 5. LEAD WITH WHAT YOU WANT**
Don't let your caregiving status define your ambition.

CREATE YOUR TOOLBOX



SETTING STRONG BOUNDARIES AS A WORKING CAREGIVER

LEEN VERMEERSCH

The Conversation Doctor



Say the ask.

Not the apology in front of it.

DEBA — four ways we hand someone a reason to manage us

D DEFEND

E EXPLAIN

B BLAME

A APOLOGIZE

Replace DEBA with the clean ask — four steps, no apology:

1

WHAT'S TRUE

"Back-to-back meetings until 5, pickup at 5:15."

2

WHAT IT COSTS YOU

"That leaves me rushing, every time."

3

WHAT YOU NEED

"I need my Tuesday afternoons protected."

4

THE CONCRETE ASK

"Can we move my 4pm to Wednesday?"

The boundary is the message. You don't need to apologise for it first.

CREATE YOUR TOOLBOX



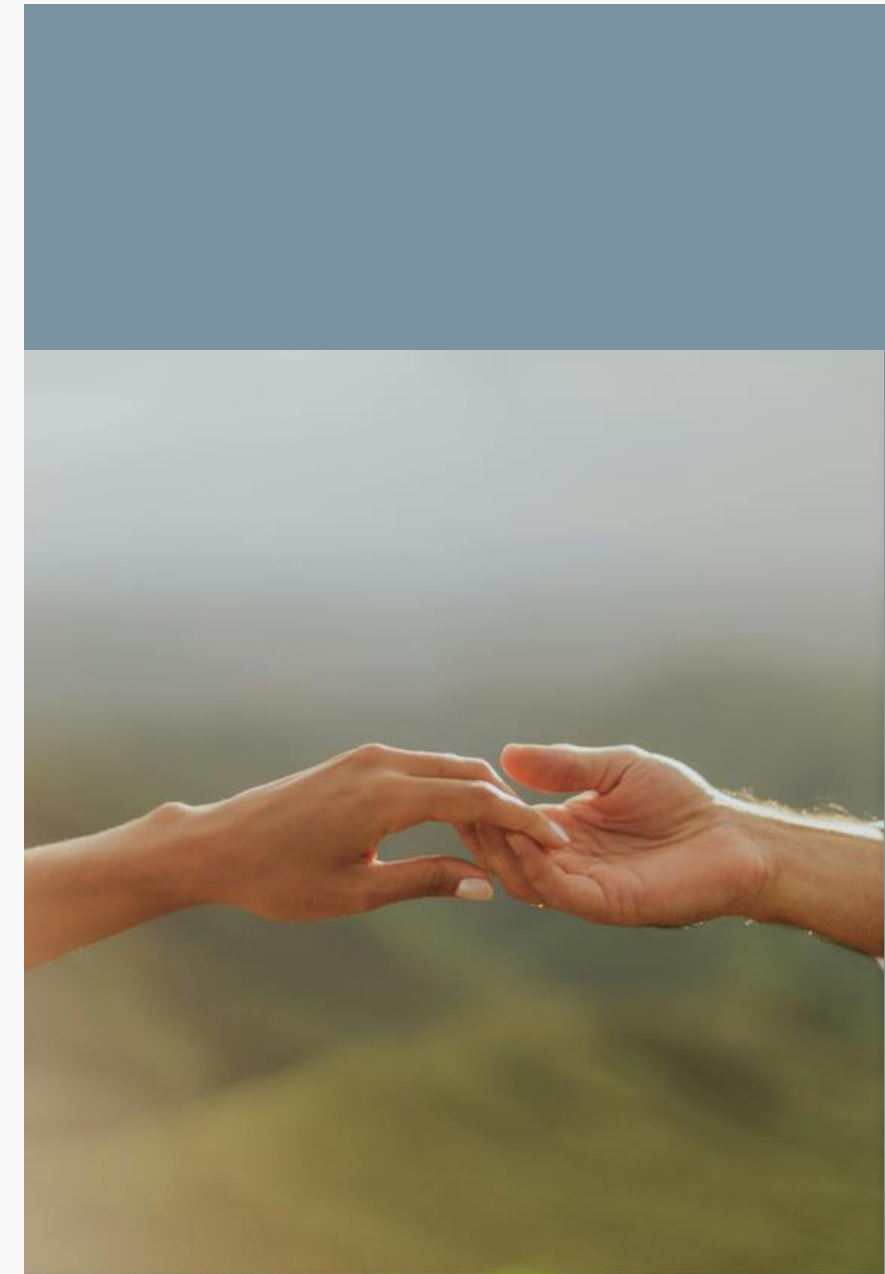
PREVENTION OF PARENTAL BURN OUT
MARIE CHRISTINE WATS
Mazalé Solutions

PARENTAL BURNOUT

You don't have to carry it all alone

It means that you have been carrying too much,
for too long, while your resources are no longer
enough to cope.

- It is not a failure.
- It is not a lack of love.
- It is a signal that it is time to ask for support.



MAZALÉ
SOLUTIONS



consultance en parentalité pour
entreprises et particuliers

What can help?

READ

Parental Burnout:

Moïra Mikolajczak & Isabelle Roskam

burn-out parental : l'éviter et s'en sortir, publié chez Odile Jacob.

LISTEN

La Matrescence – Episode 82: Parental Burnout, with Isabelle Roskam

TALK

To your partner, family, friends or other parents.

Don't stay alone with your exhaustion.

SEEK HELP

Talk to your doctor, psychologist or a professional trained in parental burnout.

<https://www.tipsychologyhealth.com/fr/annuaires/annuaires-professionnels-burnout/>

REMEMBER

- **It takes a village to raise a child.**
- **Asking for help is also a way of taking care of your family.**



MAZALÉ
SOLUTIONS



*consultance en parentalité pour
entreprises et particuliers*

CREATE YOUR TOOLBOX



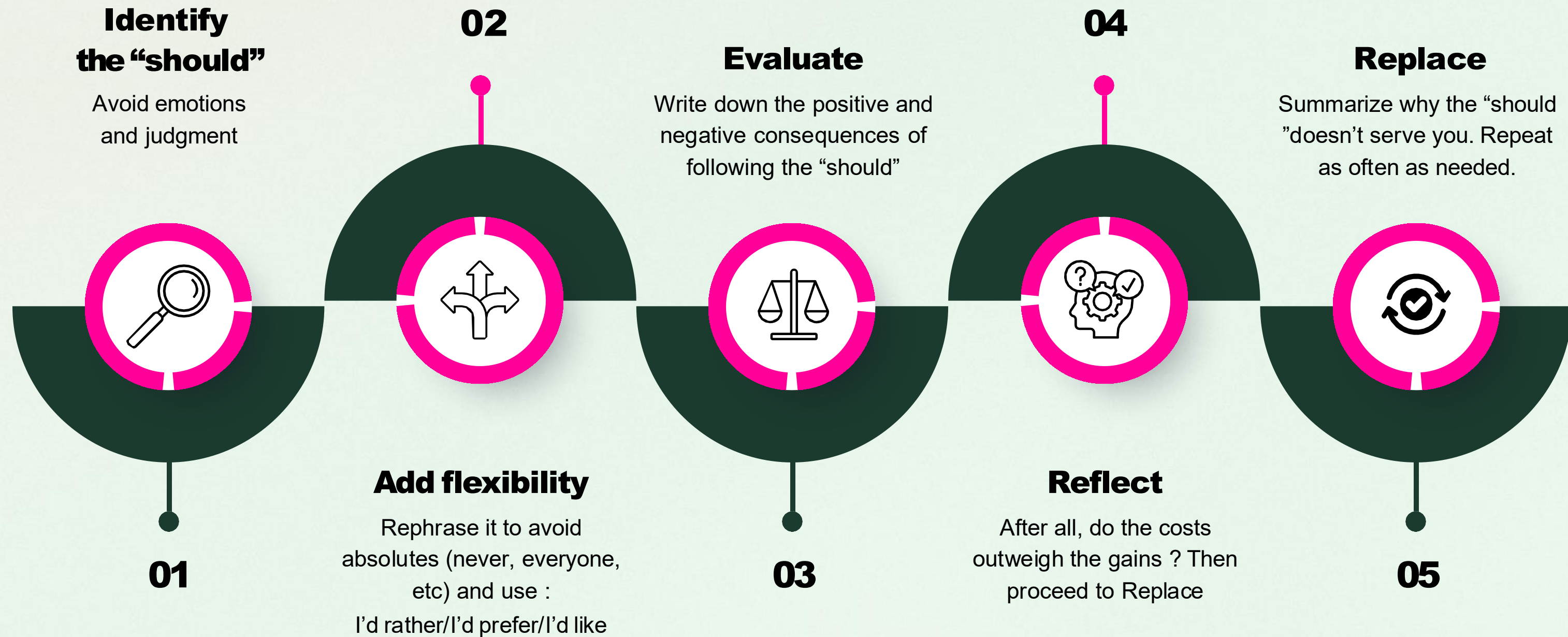
**NEVER GOOD ENOUGH: HOW TO MANAGE
GUILT AND PERFECTIONISM AS A WORKING
CARETAKER**

ITZEL LUSENTI

WOMEN IN TECH® Global

THE “SHOULDs”

You are constantly evaluating what you say, what you do, and even what you feel by comparing you to an ideal of perfection. These are the “shoulds”.



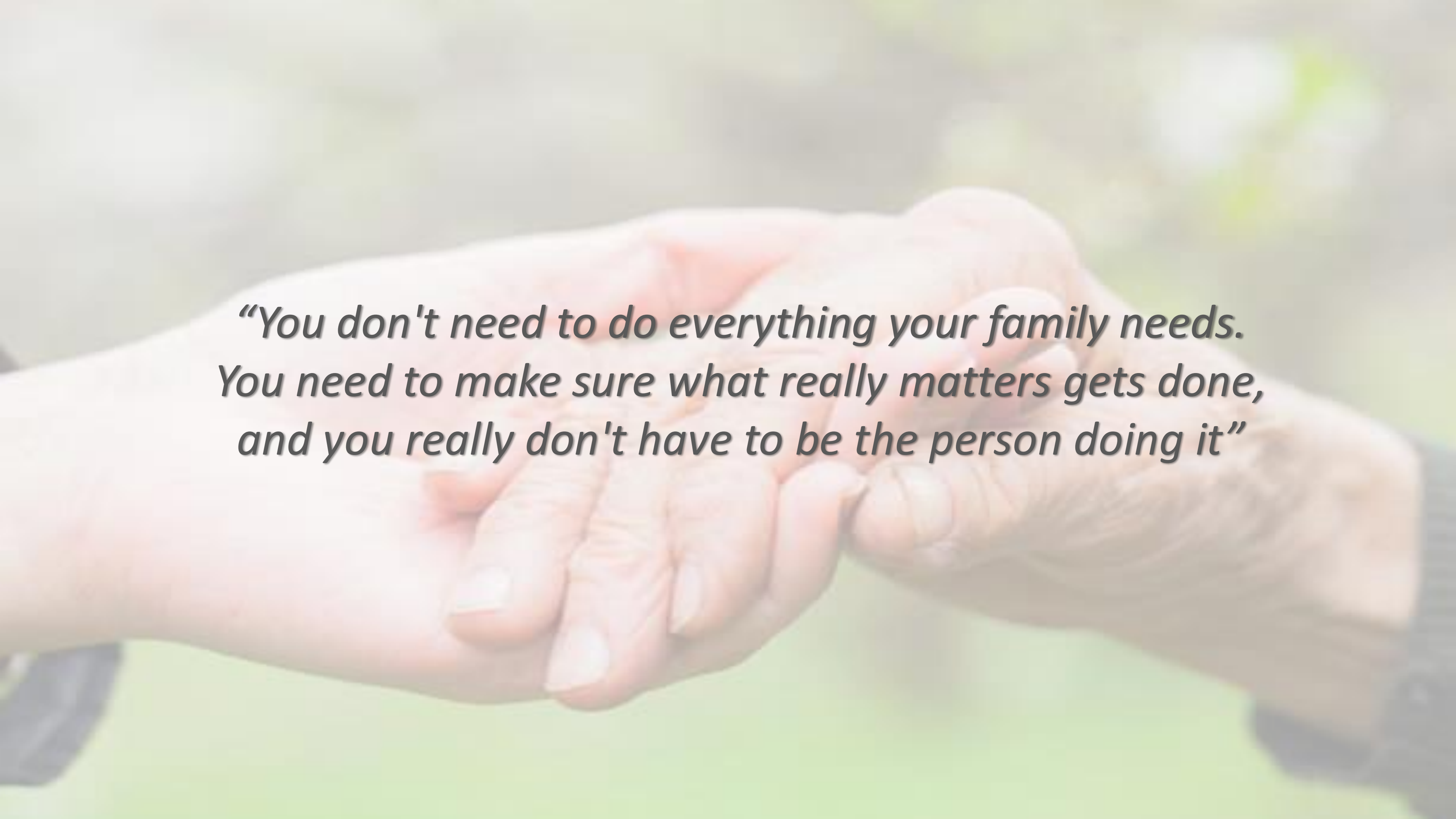
CREATE YOUR TOOLBOX



TOO MUCH TO CARE FOR? – SURVIVING THE SANDWICH YEARS

CLAIRE GODDING

WO.MEN IN FINANCE BELGIUM

A close-up photograph of two hands clasped together in a supportive grip. The hands are light-skinned, and the background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid on the hands in a dark, italicized font.

*“You don't need to do everything your family needs.
You need to make sure what really matters gets done,
and you really don't have to be the person doing it”*

TIME TO NETWORK !

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